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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to show how a teacher's training affects his or her attitudes toward teaching. Twelve statements dealing with various aspects of education in relation to subject and student oriented instruction were distributed to 15 traditionally prepared teachers and 15 Teacher Corps prepared teachers. Each participant indicated in writing and verbally the extent of agreement or disagreement with the statement. Samples were stratified in order to determine patterns and areas of agreement and disagreement among teachers. Fisher's T-Table was used to correlate the differences between the two groups. Results indicated a significant difference between the two sample groups. Implications, recommendations, and conclusions are presented. Research material and an 8-item bibliography are included. (MJM)

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A Comparison of Attitudes Held by Traditionally Prepared Teachers and Teacher Corps (Cycle 5: 1968-70) Prepared Teachers Regarding Subject-Oriented Instruction and Student-Oriented Instruction

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CONTENTS

PURPOSE 3

PROCEDURE 4

FINDINGS 5

IMPLICATIONS 8

RESEARCH 10

RECOMMENDATION 13

SAMPLE 15

CONFERENCE QUESTIONS 16

TABLE I 17

TABLE II 18

TABLE III 19

TABLE IV 20

TABLE V 21

BIBLIOGRAPHY 22

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to: 1) investigate and identify the various attitudes traditionally prepared and Teacher Corps prepared teachers have in regard to subject oriented instruction and student oriented instruction, 2) collect and analyze data regarding the attitudes of the two groups, 3) make recommendations concerning teacher attitudes toward student and subject oriented instruction.

This study was conducted to show how a teacher's training affects his or her attitudes toward teaching. It was also hoped that this study would prove helpful in understanding and improving teacher preparation.

PROCEDURE

Twelve statements (see Page 15) dealing with various aspects of education in relation to subject and student oriented instruction was distributed to a sample of fifteen traditionally prepared teachers and fifteen Teacher Corps prepared teachers, all of whom taught in the Philadelphia School District. Each Teacher in the two groups had to react to each item on the sample in writing and then orally.

The reaction to each item indicated whether a teacher agreed or disagreed with a given statement and the extent to which a teacher agreed or disagreed. Conferences were held with the teachers to have them express their views and feelings about each item.

In order to analyze responses effectively, all samples were stratified in order to determine patterns and areas of agreement and disagreement among the teachers. Also, Fisher's T-Table was used to correlate the differences between the two groups.

All responses centered around the basic generalization of whether the teacher should adjust and relate content material to the ability and interest level of the child or whether pupils should adjust to the level and interest of the subject material which the teacher presents.

FINDINGS

The study revealed that there was a significant difference between the two uncorrelated samples with regards to teacher attitudes toward subject oriented instruction and student oriented instruction. This difference was indicated through: 1) a statement response sheet completed by the two groups of teachers, 2) individual conferences with both groups and 3) computation of the difference between the means of the two groups by using Fisher's T-Table.

It was found that a majority of the traditionally prepared teachers felt that they should select instructional subject-matter to teach regardless of the interests of students. However, most traditionally prepared teachers saw the need for student reactions to how they taught their subject-matter. In oral conferences, traditionally prepared teachers rationalized their attitudes regarding students and subject oriented instruction. A majority stated that as professional educators they had developed the skill, ability, and knowledge to plan and present subject material without pupil input, because the latter were not capable due to limit experiences. From this basic rationalization, the traditionally prepared teachers stressed the following views:

1. Subject-matter should be developed and planned in advance for all pupils, and the teacher must state clearly what she expects of each student.

2. Schools must prepare pupils to deal with the social, economic and emotional problems of life, therefore the teacher based on his own experiences should select the kind of curriculum pupils should have.

The majority of traditionally prepared teachers also felt that it was their function to give pupils information, but the responsibility for learning rested with the pupil and parents.

Two thirds of the traditionally prepared teachers reported that their main objective was to develop the personality of students. During oral conferences it was found that traditionally prepared teachers felt that personality development of pupils took place as pupils patterned their behavior after those of the teacher.

A majority of Teacher Corps prepared teachers felt that the concept of child-centered education had created much of the controversy in education. They indicated that the interest and reactions of students should always influence what and how a teacher selects and teaches subject-material. They indicated that a major function of teaching is student-teacher interaction through which values are developed and clarified.

In oral conferences Teacher Corps teachers indicated the following attitudes:

1. The content that a teacher selects for instruction should be flexible so that it follows the abilities and interests of pupils.

2. School is a part of the total life experiences of a pupil and there, instructor should consider and deal with the basic needs of pupils.

Teacher Corps prepared teachers revealed that pupil-teacher planning should promote a healthy learning atmosphere where the individual needs of pupils would be carefully observed. They felt that this could not be done with subject-centered teaching. The differences in attitudes between the two groups was supported statistically through the use of Fisher T-Table which indicated the following about the two groups:

1. The difference between the means of the two groups was 3.73. This indicated that the attitudes and feelings of the two groups differed significantly in regards to the items that they responded to.
2. When the two groups were tested as two small correlated samples (two matched groups), it was found that an absolute value of T as large of 1.761 (p-.05) which indicated that the probability is 5 in 100 (or 5%) that an absolute value of T as large as 2.048 will occur on the basis of chance variations in sampling the two groups.

In terms of Fisher's T-Table, this means that there is a chance that 10% of every 100 teachers sampled in each group will give us a probability that a value of T as large as the obtained value, or larger, could occur on the basis of chance variations when the two matched groups are sampled, and 5% of every 100 teachers when the two groups are sampled as unmatched groups.

IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

The study indicates that there were basic differences in the two groups sampled. It seems that these differences in attitudes developed from a variety of sources. One of these is the different levels and kinds of preparation and training each group of teachers received.

The traditionally prepared teachers in this study received their training from teacher's colleges, all of which had a subject centered curriculum program. In these colleges stress was placed upon how well a teacher mastered and taught subject-content material. These teachers took method courses which stressed the importance of the teacher being a dominant and authoritarian figure in the classroom.

In contrast, Teacher Corps teachers received a special kind of training in which they worked in the community, school, and university to gain experiences and skills that would enable them to understand and provide for the needs of pupils. An important ingredient in this training was team-work, where five or six teacher interns worked together in using the total resources of the community, school, and university in order to develop their awareness and sensitivity to the basic needs of the different learning styles and interests of children.

It seems therefore, that the major reason for the difference between the attitudes of traditionally trained teachers and Teacher Corps trained teachers is the preparation

and training they experienced. Teacher Corps teachers were bombarded with a variety of training personnel and resources that guided their development, with the aims being child-centered, while traditionally prepared teachers had a subject-centered preparational program with the teacher being the focal point of instructional experiances. Also, there were limited resources used in their development.

RESEARCH

There has been a wealth of literature and research produced in the area of teacher attitudes concerning child-centered and subject-centered education. Past and current literature stress that the goals to positive learning are obtained through child-centered education. This kind of education is one in which the child is the focus point of all planning and instruction. The child's interest, abilities and needs are incorporated into classroom instruction so that steady progress and achievement can be gained.

Studies by Rosenthal and Jacobson indicate that learning is increased when teachers recognize and teach to the individual needs of children, while in subject-centered instruction the teacher has little or no consciousness of individual needs and sees therefore little or no gain in pupil achievement. The idea of child-centered education is supported by Robert Anderson in his book, Teaching in a World of Change, in which he states that a teacher who is sensitive to pupil needs and plans to these needs will meet greater success than a subject-minded teacher who sees pupils as a group at the same level of development. William Kvaraceus, who has instructed and written about youth in urban areas, speaks very consistantly of the need for teachers to be child conscious. He points out that subject conscious teachers usually illustrate an in-

difference toward the feelings and needs of pupils, while the child-centered teacher builds the instruction around concepts of self-worth and achievement of pupils. Also, in Realities of the Urban Classroom, Alexander Moore concludes through many concrete observations, that teachers must learn to plan through the needs of pupils in order to make teaching more relevant and effective.

Most educators agree that effective teacher training programs are those in which the teacher is allowed to evaluate his own needs and also those of pupils. Morris Krugman states in the Schools and the Urban Crisis, that if we continue to train teachers in the traditional way, mainly being aware of subject-matter, both teacher and student will continue to meet frustration. He stresses, therefore, that teacher training institutions must develop programs that allow the teacher to see, understand, and instruct each child as a person with feelings, attitudes, skills, and needs. This idea is also examined by William Kvaraceus in his book entitled Negro Self-Concept, in which he makes a plea for teacher training institutions to develop and guide teaching personalities as well as specific teaching skills. This illustrates that teachers must be aware of and capable of dealing with their own feelings before they can be successful in producing social and intellectual students.

Some efforts have been made by a few educators to develop programs for training teachers that aim for child-centered objectives. Most of these programs attempt to use a variety of personnel and resources in order to produce a different and more effective teacher. Training personnel may include local community people, university specialists, school staff members, agency and organizational personnel and school pupils. Scientific and innovative methods and techniques are used to develop positive and effective teaching styles. The prime objective of many new teacher training programs is to produce teachers who are sensitive to and can plan for the needs of pupils.

RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

The differences between traditionally prepared teachers and Teacher Corps teachers as pointed out by the result of the study seem to be based upon the preparation and training each received. Traditionally prepared teachers in the main were trained in programs that saw mastery of subject-matter as their prime objective, while teachers of Teacher Corps were prepared in a program that stressed and evaluated attitudes, needs, and interests of pupils.

It seems, therefore, that in teaching training programs, more emphasis should be placed upon the sensitivity of and planning for specific pupil needs. The inclusion of this objective in educational courses and in-service training should do much to promote the idea of child-centered instruction.

Basic teaching guides should be written so that they give information at the various instructional levels about the emotional, psychological, intellectual, social and physical development of children.

Group and individual educational workshops, seminars and conferences should include community,university, school, and agency personnal, who have specific experiences, resources and information that is most useful in helping a teacher guide and direct his instruction to the needs and interests of children.

Three major facets of a good teacher training program can be listed as the following:

1. The development in teachers of a commitment to the individual worth of each child and to that child's growth and progress.
2. The need of every teacher to learn every possible thing there is to learn about teaching.
3. Teachers must be taught how to diversify their means for instructing pupils in order to meet individual needs. This includes using all of the available resources that can be obtained.

These ideas or aims hopefully will produce teachers who value attitudes, feelings, abilities, and needs of themselves and their students.

Finally, teachers become what they are trained to become in precisely the same measure as other professionals in other disciplines. Therefore, the school , university and community render valuable service to pupils and teachers when they are included as an integral part of the total development of children.

Below are a number of statements which deal with various aspects of education. You are asked to be as candid as possible in responding to each item. Select your answers from the categories below and fill the appropriate number in the blank to the left of each statement.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Slightly disagree
4. Slightly agree
5. Agree
6. Strongly agree

_____ 1. A teacher should direct most of his attention to his subject.

_____ 2. A teacher is justified in giving more attention to those students interested in the subject.

_____ 3. The interest of the students should not influence the content the teacher selects for instruction.

_____ 4. The students in a class are always more important than any subject matter the teacher seeks to teach.

_____ 5. If a teacher becomes involved too much with his students, he will tend to neglect his subject.

_____ 6. The concept of child centered education has created much of the confusion in education today.

_____ 7. The most essential characteristic desired of the really good teacher is that he be a master of his subject.

_____ 8. It is not a major function of the teacher to become concerned with the personality development of his students.

_____ 9. A teacher should not allow student reactions to influence how he teaches his subject.

_____ 10. It is possible for a teacher who relates well to students to be just as effective as an agent of learning as is one who does not have this quality but who is a master of his subject.

_____ 11. A teacher must be prepared to adjust his course of study to individuals.

_____ 12. Lecturing is justified if the teacher feels this to be his most effective approach to teaching.

CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

1. Should a teacher direct most of his attention to his subject?

2. Should a teacher give more attention to those students interested in the subject?

3. Should the interests of students influence the content the teacher selects for instruction?

4. Do you feel teachers neglect subject-matter when he becomes involved too much with students?

5. Has the concept of child-centered education created much of the confusion in education today?

6. Should a major function of the teacher be developing the personality of students?

7. Should the interest and reaction of students influence the teachers instruction?

8. Should the teacher adjust his instruction to individual needs?

TRADITIONALLY PREPARED TEACHERS

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	
ITEMS ↓	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTALS
1	5	2 | 11	4	1	1 | 4	2	15
2	2	4 | 8	2	2	3 | 7	2	15
3	2	5 | 7	0	4	3 | 8	1	15
4	0	3 | 5	2	2	5 | 10	3	15
5	4	3 | 9	2	1	3 | 6	2	15
6	3	2 | 7	2	5	1 | 8	2	15
7	2	2 | 12	8	0	1 | 3	2	15
8	6	4 | 10	0	3	0 | 5	2	15
9	5	7 | 12	0	1	1 | 3	1	15
10	2	3 | 7	2	1	2 | 8	5	15
11	5	1 | 6	0	1	4 | 9	4	15
12	1	4 | 7	2	2	4 | 8	2	15
TOTALS	37	40 | 101	24	23	28 | 79	28	180
		DISAGREES			AGREES		

TABLE I

TEACHER CORPS PREPARED TEACHERS

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	
ITEMS ↓	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTALS
1	3	7 | 14	4	0	1 | 1	0	15
2	4	4 | 9	1	2	4 | 6	6	15
3	9	3 | 13	1	1	0 | 2	1	15
4	0	0 | 1	1	2	4 | 14	8	15
5	5	6 | 13	2	2	0 | 2	0	15
6	5	5 | 12	2	2	0 | 3	1	15
7	4	5 | 12	3	2	1 | 3	0	15
8	4	7 | 12	1	1	2 | 3	0	15
9	7	5 | 12	0	1	1 | 3	1	15
10	2	3 | 6	1	1	5 | 9	3	15
11	1	2 | 4	1	1	2 | 11	8	15
12	3	4 | 7	0	1	5 | 8	2	15
TOTALS	47	51 | 115	17	16	25 | 65	24	180
		DISAGREES			AGREES		

TABLE II

A Test of Significance for the Difference between the Means of Two Small Correlated Samples

SUBJECTS	X TRADITIONALLY PREPARED TEACHERS	Y TEACHER CORPS PREPARED TEACHERS	D = X − Y DIFFERENCE	D^2 DIFFERENCE SQUARED	
1	47	33	6.0	36	
2	35	43	-8.0	64	
3	43	28	15.0	225	
4	47	45	2.0	4	
5	34	38	-4.0	16	
6	41	33	8.0	64	
7	35	34	1.0	1	
8	34	36	-2.0	4	
9	39	34	5.0	25	
10	35	41	-6.0	36	
11	35	39	-4.0	16	
12	39	29	10.0	100	
13	43	36	7.0	49	
14	46	33	13.0	169	
15	36	31	5.0	25	
$n = 15$	$X = 39.26$	$Y = 35.53$	$\Sigma D = 48.0$	$\Sigma D^2 = 834$	

TABLE III

The Significance of a Difference between the Means of Two Small Correlated Samples (using Fisher's Table of T).

STEP I Calculate the mean of these differences

$$\bar{D} = \frac{\Sigma D}{n} = \frac{48}{15} = 3.2$$

STEP II Calculate the standard deviation (s)

$$s^2 = \frac{\Sigma D^2}{n} - \bar{D}^2 = \frac{834}{15} - (3.2)^2 = 45.36$$

$$s = \sqrt{45.36} = 6.7$$

STEP III Calculate the standard error of the mean of differences ($s_{\bar{D}}$)

$$s_{\bar{D}} = \frac{s}{\sqrt{n-1}} = \frac{6.7}{\sqrt{14}} = 1.79$$

STEP IV Calculate t

$$t = \frac{\bar{D}}{s_{\bar{D}}} = \frac{3.2}{1.79} = 1.78$$

$t = 1.78$

1.761 $(P = .1)$

TABLE IV

The Significance of a Difference between the Means of Two Small Uncorrelated Samples (using Fisher's Table of T)

$$t = \frac{39.26 - 35.53}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{51.0 + 55.0}{15 + 15 - 2}\right)\left(\frac{15 + 15}{15 \times 15}\right)}}$$

$$t = \frac{3.72}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{106.0}{28}\right)\left(\frac{30}{225}\right)}} = \frac{3.72}{\sqrt{\frac{31800}{9100}}}$$

$$t = \frac{3.72}{\sqrt{3.49}} = \frac{3.72}{1.732}$$

$t = 2.13$ Approximate Value of t $= 2.048$ $(p = .05)$

	Group X Traditional Teachers	Group Y Teacher Corps Teachers
n =	15	15
Mean =	39.26	35.53
* Σx^2 & Σy^2 =	51.0	55.0

* The deviations of the individual scores from the means of their respective samples

TABLE V

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